



NONHUMAN RIGHTS PROJECT

March 10, 2022

Connecticut General Assembly
Environment Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 3200
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: Support for H.B. 5293, An Act Prohibiting the Use of Wild or Exotic Animals in Traveling Animal Acts

Dear Honorable Members of the Environment Committee:

On behalf of the Nonhuman Rights Project and our Connecticut supporters, I am writing to express our strong support for H.B. 5293, an act prohibiting the use of wild or exotic animals in traveling animal acts. We thank you for your willingness to consider and hear testimony on this important piece of legislation.

Wild animals live complex and emotionally rich lives in their natural environment where they can engage in their innate behaviors. Animals in circuses face a bleak existence, one where they are subjected to beatings, psychological torment, and perpetual isolation. They are deprived of their liberty, forced to live in cages and trailers, and prohibited from moving about freely or engaging in any behavior that is natural to them.

Watching wild animals perform unnatural tricks does not foster respect or appreciation for wildlife. Rather, it teaches children that it's acceptable to exploit and mistreat animals for amusement and provides a distorted understanding of the animals' natural behaviors. Americans are increasingly signaling their preferences for more compassionate treatment of our fellow creatures, both with their pocketbooks and their choices in entertainment.

Taking the public's lead on this issue, states across the nation are moving to prevent circuses and other traveling animal acts from exploiting animals. California, New Jersey, Hawaii, New York, Illinois and over 100 cities have passed outright bans or restrictions on the use of wild animals in circuses. It's time for Connecticut to join these states and cities and ban the use of wild animals in traveling exhibits and shows. This is an urgently needed step to help protect elephants, nonhuman primates, and other wild animals from human-caused harm.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Courtney Fern
Director of Government Relations
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